

A better way for Engineers to distribute Subdivision Plats and Development Plans to Mapmakers

How are plans currently distributed to mapping agencies?

There are two main players in the process; the engineer and the mapmaker. When an engineer develops a subdivision plat or a development plan it is usually in AutoCAD format. Paper copies of the plan are printed and distributed to agencies as they request them. The agencies digitize the plans so they can be used to update maps used to plan their future networks and facilities. It takes a lot of time for the engineering firm to duplicate the plans and send them out to various requestors. It also takes a lot of time for the mapping agencies to digitize the plans once they receive them. Eliminating the hard copy middle-step would make the process more efficient for all parties involved.



How can this process be improved?

By taking advantage of the power of the Internet, this process can be streamlined. This will greatly increase the efficiency with

which information flows and has the potential for significant cost savings and customer service improvement for the mapping agencies that use this information. If each engineering firm had its own secure plan 'storeroom' on the web, they could make plans available for download by any agency they designated. This would cut down on requests for the same files from multiple agencies.

It would also relieve the agencies from the burden of digitizing the plans once they receive them.

The **Tucson Area GIS Cooperative**¹, in cooperation with **Integrated Digital Technologies (IDT)**², has developed a web

¹ Since 1999, the Tucson Area GIS Cooperative has been a forum for sharing knowledge about GIS among people in government, private industry and academia who have a need for tools to better understand and communicate geographically related information. Current active members represent many local government agencies. Pima Association of Governments, the University of Arizona and Tucson Electric Power also are represented.

² IDT is a Tucson firm whose business is the secure storage of building plans and plats. Though based in Tucson, they serve customers throughout the Southwest.

portal³ to serve as a plans repository for engineering firms and mapping agencies.



Who will use the GIS Coop Web Portal?

There are two main categories of users.

- Engineers will use the site to place plans in one secure location where they can be retrieved by many agencies, both public and private.
- Members of the GIS coop involved in mapping will use the site to gain access to the library of plans stored there. They need to update their working maps with proposed subdivision plats or development plans even as these plans are going through the approval process. The portal will store CAD files that can be downloaded and brought into mapping software such as AutoCAD or ESRI's ArcMap. Currently, mapmaking agencies may not have access to the

³ A web portal is a World Wide Web site whose purpose is to be a major starting point for users when they connect to the Web.. The GIS coop portal is very specialized. Its only purpose is to offer users access to a library of subdivision plats and development plans in southern Arizona.

plats or plans until the County records them.



How will the GIS Coop Web Portal work?

All users will log on to the same web site. IDT hosts the site.

Engineers will use the site to fill out an application describing the project and the principals involved. They will then upload plans to the IDT site where they will be catalogued. Once this has been done, email will be sent to appropriate GIS coop members based on where the project is located and what utilities will be serving it. Coop members will go to a different section of the web site to download plans into their own mapping environment. See the flowchart for another description of the process.



When can we start using the GIS Coop Web Portal?

It is ready to be used right now. Here is how:

Users will visit the website www.tucsonaz.gov/gis and click on the link in the 'What's new' section marked Tucson Area GIS Coop Web Portal. This link will take you to the IDT site where you can click the "register now" link to begin the registration process. Engineering firms and mapmaking agencies each have to register

once to use the site. If the engineering firm or mapmaking agency registers a generic userid and password, this will enable multiple users within the office to check the incoming emails. It will also mean that he userid and password will remain viable through changes in personnel in the office. Once the registration process is completed, the user will receive email confirmation from IDT. Then the user can log on to the web site. Engineers can begin to use it to upload drawings and mapmaking agencies can use it to download plans.



Will the GIS Coop Web Portal also be used for plan review?

Not at this time. For the time being, it will just be used as a repository for plans to be downloaded by agencies that need to update their maps. After we all gain experience using the portal to expedite the distribution of plans for mapping, its use could be expanded to expedite the distribution of subdivision plats and development plans for plan review.



Can you give me a practical example of how the portal will improve a business process ?

Pima County updates the parcel base when a plat has been recorded. If the Pima County Transportation Department could retrieve plats from the web portal before the plat has

been recorded, they could get a head start on updating the parcel base. When the plat was recorded, the County could publish the updates quicker on Pima County's MapGuide web site.



Who will answer the rest of my questions?

For questions about the process of submitting plans to the portal, please call 791-5550 or email bill.marum@tucsonaz.gov. For questions about signing up to use the web portal or technical questions about the portal, call 319-0988 or email Jace@IDTplans.com.